

# Active and Intentional Listening

When we *actively* and *intentionally* listen, we pay attention to the speaker's

- Message or content
- Words
- Non-verbal cues and body language
- Emotions or feelings

We reflect back what we hear by clarifying, acknowledging thoughts or feelings, organizing or summarizing ideas, identifying bigger ideas and rephrasing the overall experience.

Category	Sounds like...
<b>CLARIFYING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'm hearing... is that correct?</li> <li>• It sounds like... did I miss anything?</li> <li>• So you are hoping that...</li> <li>• You sound mostly concerned about...</li> </ul>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGING</b> Thoughts or feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It sounds like...</li> <li>• So, you are wondering if...</li> <li>• In other words...</li> <li>• So, you're frustrated because...(fill in relevant feeling)</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZING</b> Or summarizing ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So, there are three issues...</li> <li>• On the one hand..., and on the other hand...</li> <li>• So if..., then ...</li> </ul>
<b>IDENTIFYING</b> Bigger ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hmm, it sounds important to you that...</li> <li>• So, at the heart of your concern is...</li> <li>• So, you are a person who...</li> <li>• It sounds like a goal for you is...</li> </ul>
<b>REPHRASING</b> The overall experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That sounds really hard.</li> <li>• That's a lot.</li> <li>• Wow.</li> </ul> <p><i>These usually require a second paraphrase.</i></p>

## Tips:

- Direct your mind to simply receive and understand the communication of the speaker.
- Tell your mind that when the speaker finishes, it will get the chance to say what it understood to see if it fits with what the speaker meant.
- You don't have to get all the details right: aim for the most important ideas, the essence of the message.
- Be cautious not to "parrot-phrase" or mimic what the speaker is saying.
- Look for a "sign-off"—a verbal or non-verbal indication that the person felt heard and understood. If you don't get one, invite the speaker to clarify anything you might not have understood.